

Approved
REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 21, 2013

The Wethersfield Town Council held a meeting on Monday, October 21, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 505 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield.

Present: Councilors Hurley, Kotkin, Manousos, McAlister, Montinieri, Roberts, Deputy Mayor Console, and Chairperson Hemmann. Absent: Councilor Drake.

Also present: Jeff Bridges, Town Manager, RaeAnn Palmer, Assistant Town Manager and Dolores G. Sassano, Town Clerk.

Councilor Kotkin led the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Charles Forsdick, 18 Monticello Drive, commented in support of the creation of a School Security Director position stating the education of our children is one of our most important, if not, the most important priority for their future and the future of our country. He commented if we can take something positive from these tragedies it would be to motivate us to make sure their environment for getting that education is secure and safe and the least we can do in our own community is establish that position and put somebody in the position who has the background and knowledge to do it. He added that it would be a tremendous addition to the community as a whole and certainly to benefit the education of our kids and keep them safe.

Sharon Perkins, 55 McMullen Ave., commented with an update to the traffic monitor location she discussed at the last meeting she attended. She stated the next day she received a call from Police Chief Cetran to address her concerns for the location of the monitor. He explained the monitor can scan the entire street no matter where it was placed. She stated he offered her the data compiled in a report so she can see the activity of traffic on their street and she accepted. That data was important because it revealed some important measurements regarding the speed and volume of traffic travelling on McMullen Avenue. The excessive speeds and volume of traffic on McMullen Avenue warrant the installation of traffic calming measures. Methods were suggested to Jeff Bridges in a letter making McMullen Avenue a one-way street and the installation of traffic tables or humps. She stated examples can be found near Blue Back Square as well as the west end of Hartford where they have installed them with great success over there. Police patrol has increased in the neighborhood and they are very thankful for that and it has calmed things down, however, as needs arise around town the police resources will need to be relocated so they are looking for a more permanent solution to the issue. Ms. Perkins stated that she is looking forward to working with the town council to identify the best solutions for calming their street and stabilizing their neighborhood. She thanked Chief Cetran for staying in touch with her throughout these few months. She also thanked those that reached out to her after the meeting regarding her issue.

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Mike Cuddigan, 49 Westlook Road, commented that there were no meeting minutes available from the Budget and Finance meetings prior to passing the budget. He doesn't know how the current budget came to be. He has no objection to the work being done in that committee but there were no minutes available. He also commented that it is an election year and feels that it is incumbent on the voters to look into and figure out how this change occurred, who decided to do it this way and basically hide the deliberations.

Paul Copp, 100 Executive Square, commented on no bid contracts and that the fire truck specs are going to be so tight, it is essentially going to be a no bid contract. He commented that as he understands it, the reason why they can't get one off the shelf is because it won't fit through the doors and suggested how about changing the doors. He commented on the Citizens Audit Committees and understands that Mr. Bridges put in a call to the Town of Enfield Town Manager who has used this and would be very interested to know what Jeff found out about that. He commented that he would like to hear more about a possible resolution to put in a plan to reduce budgets. Mr. Copp commented to bring the citizens into some of the decision-making around the town and one of the things we must do is have more capital expenditures out for referendum, because they need to be brought into this. Mr. Copp commented that we need to go back to 10 voting districts. He also commented we should have a real-time system for the town where anytime we write a check out, it should be posted immediately on the website. Mr. Copp stated that the residents in town have questions and by doing this, it will help educate them as to what's going on with town expenses.

David Caruk, 149 Broad Street, commented that he appreciates all the council's efforts throughout the year and wished the best for them all during the election process.

Lee Sekas, 117 Wells Rd., commented that several councilors came to the First Church Village several weeks ago and talked to our seniors and he appreciates that. He stated that October 25, 26, and 27th they will be having a Halloween Fundraiser and encouraged folks to attend.

Robert Young, 20 Coppermill Rd., commented money was allocated to the Board of Education for the School Security Officer position but they chose to eliminate it and people should be complaining to them about it and not the Town Council. Mr. Young commented that the Council cannot resist spending money. He commented that problems over the years with the current radio system were kept secret and the public should have been informed of them prior to six months before the purchase of the new system. Mr. Young commented that we should have budget referendums on the entire budget every year.

George Ruhe, 956 Cloverdale Circle, commented on the election and the selection process for the citizens in town. He commented that he hopes the next council will continue to allow the citizens to speak at the council meetings. He commented that the Board of Education is not interested in what the folks have to say in this town. He wished the councilors good luck on the election.

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COUNCIL REPORTS

No reports.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mayor Hemmann commented that there was a letter sent to the Town Manager from part of the council in regards to the Security Director asking that the Town Manager work with the Superintendent of Schools and the Police Chief to really talk through what the needs are and develop a good plan over the course of the next several months prior to the budget deliberations that will begin for the following year so that they will have complete information.

Mayor Hemmann commented that the Keane Foundation had a very successful Cove Park Carnival. She stated that it was very good weather this year and many of us volunteered.

Mayor Hemmann commented we had a visit from our sister city delegation in Nagayo, Japan. She stated it was a very full two and half days and they were very appreciative. She stated that they brought us a gift of a beautiful fan which we will put on display and added that they also shared with us some different flags that they used during particular events that each of their different areas put on within the town. She stated that there is a display in the Library of some of the mementos that we have received from the Japanese delegation when they have visited. She added that Wethersfield did visit Nagayo in 1999 and a delegation from Nagayo visited us in 2002. Mayor Hemmann commented that we did spend a good time showing our guests around our beautiful town and we touched many different facets of the town and we were able to take them to the State Capitol for a tour and they were able to meet the Lieutenant Governor, Nancy Wyman, who was very gracious in her meeting. They were also able to speak to one of the Commissioners on the DECD in regards to economic development and some potential information that could be helpful to them for the trade purposes. She stated that they also visited the Mark Twain house at their request. Mayor Hemmann commented that all in all it was a very busy night and a busy couple of days and we had the community reception and thanked everyone who came out and stated that it was very nice and they were very appreciative. Mayor Hemmann thanked all those who helped plan the visit and who participated in the visit. It was a very nice gesture and they have some things that they would like to look at. They would like to explore student exchanges so we will be talking about that in the future.

Mayor Hemmann commented that from the perspective of the next meeting of the council prior to the swearing in of the new council on November 11th, there will be a transitional meeting prior to the swearing in of the new council to tie up some of the remaining business. She stated that there will be minutes and could be a couple agenda items.

Mayor Hemmann wanted to touch base on a couple of comments. She commented that Fire House No. 2 is a structural issue in regards to some of the fire trucks in regards to size and length

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so the specifications have been developed so that it will fit into that building and serve that end of the community. She commented on information for the public, the Management Report is on the town website every week and is available and talks about things that are upcoming and activities that are going to happen and committee meetings as well. She commented on the radio system regarding the public's safety of our citizens and the notification of the public during times when the system has not been working correctly, that is not something that you really want to make the citizens afraid of during times when something is not functioning correctly. She stated that the council was well aware of the issues at hand and there was a plan in place in case something more severe was to happen. She stated that contingency was in place but thinks it is very important to know that the citizens were safe and protected during the whole time and still continue to be protected at this time.

Councilor Kotkin thanked Councilor McAlister for his four years on the council and stated that it has been a pleasure working with him and commented that he had a lot of good ideas and asked a lot of questions and he appreciates him raising the topic and asking the council to look a little bit differently out-of-the-box at things.

Councilor Kotkin explained that as you go door-to-door and you talk to folks, sometimes their roads are not in good shape and he has relayed some of the roads that are particularly in tough shape to the Town Manager, particularly Wheeler and Rutledge Road just below Ridge Rd. which is actually really bad. Councilor Kotkin explained that there is one other road that an acquaintance of his was bicycling down Nott Street just below Ridge Road on the east side, and popped a tire, could have fallen and so forth. He stated that as he was coming to the meeting tonight, he went over that same bumpy spot and he was wondering if we were going to be looking at that.

Mr. Bridges asked where it is.

Councilor Kotkin responded it's the area near Nott Street heading east of Ridge Rd., it's the very steep part and asked are we going to be getting to that at all just to at least smooth it out.

Mr. Bridges responded yes.

Councilor Kotkin commented that we have some road issues in town and he hopes that the next council aggressively addresses and upgrades some of these areas that are really sub-par for this town.

Councilor McAlister thanked the public for voting for him for two elections and giving him the opportunity to serve and also for everyone that comes to the meetings because it gives us something to think about. He thanked the council for the appreciation of serving with them. He stated that in the beginning, as a new council member, he didn't know a lot about the rules and regulations and, specifically, Mr. Montinieri for the years that I've gotten to know him, he's not the enemy, he is a nice guy. He stated that he appreciates getting to know everyone on the

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council and thanked Jeff and RaeAnn and stated that they have done a phenomenal job, as well as Dolores and stated that whenever we had a question, they were able to step up to the microphone and answer in any length of detail and thanked them.

Deputy Mayor Console thanked the people from McMullen Avenue for coming tonight and giving us this information from the Police Department and also for making some good progress there and stated that he will make sure that he will do whatever he can as long as he is still sitting there. He commented that he knows the Police Chief and the Wethersfield Police Department will do their best and will do a good job so you are in good hands.

Deputy Mayor Console thanked Lee for the invite to his meeting last week. He stated that he was glad that he was there and we had a little chat with some of the people. He stated that it was nice to meet those people and hear their concerns and what they need on a different perspective because they have small needs compared to some other things in this town, so we'll see what we can do as we continue there.

Deputy Mayor Console commented that he was very impressed with the Japanese visit and commented that they exchanged their Town pins. He commented on something from one of the professors which he jotted it down and it says Japan is a highly structured and traditional society and great importance is placed on loyalty, politeness, personal responsibility and on everyone working together for the good of the large group. Deputy Mayor Console stated that in their case they have over 20 council members on their city or town council so it is quite a bit more than we have, but they seem to all work in good flow and make sure they are getting things done for the good of the community. He stated that education, ambition, hard work, patience and determination are held to the highest regard. Deputy Mayor Console commented that the crime rate in Japan is one the lowest in the world and finds that by the way that they act he can see why it would and stated that they really treat each other very kindly.

Deputy Mayor Console commented that we need to prioritize shared services and it should be the number one priority along with the Safety Director for our school systems whether we work something out between the Town and the Police Department, plus the Finance Director position. He stated that he feels that we need a Chief Financial Director in this town to handle both the Board of Education and the town side and something really should be structured and vetted out with our next council as quickly as possible before we go and hire a Financial Director here in town.

Deputy Mayor Console commented on the situation with the woman who lives on 579 Ridge Rd. which he spoke about at one of the previous meetings explaining some of the conditions that she had in her house with the grant process. He stated that a couple of weeks have gone by and there has been no response back to them yet and he stated that this person really needs some type of relief and we really have to do something on the town side to cut through the red tape and really think out of the box on what we can do to improve her house and make it at least habitable again

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and fix some of the horrendous problems that have taken place. He stated that he will be meeting with her and will pass any information he gets from her he will pass along to the Town Manager.

Deputy Mayor Console commented on phantom mortgage holders in town and stated that there are quite a few houses and buildings and business that have either been foreclosed or in foreclosure and abandoned properties and minimal work is being done. He stated that he thinks it would behoove the next council to have a complete list of those properties to the best that we can do and see what we can do in order to push either the banks or whoever in a way to see if we can sell these and get these activated again in town instead of letting them sit in an idle condition. He stated that there are several of them on the Silas Deane Highway that should really be looked at.

Deputy Mayor Console commented about the radio system stating that it is a public safety issue and stated that he is concerned that he has not yet seen the final contract that was signed and is still waiting for that. He commented that he is still questioning the price tag because it was supposed to be \$3.6 million and it could range anywhere from \$3.6 to \$3.9 million. He stated that he would like to see the contract and how the wording is done so he can justify in his mind and bring it forward to other townspeople of how the radio system is going to be set up and where all the costs are and what we are going to be getting for the next 15 – 17 years. He stated that once he reads the contract he should understand it better.

Deputy Mayor Console commented on an article in the newspaper from one of the committee members who was pretty adamant that there were too many work order changes going through on the project and that things were not planned out correctly and there are a lot of issues on how the school is coming out, how the plan is being done and how the construction is being processed. Deputy Mayor Console stated that he has been on a quest as far as the tennis courts go and plans to stay on that and stated that he received a letter today from the Town Manager and thanked him but stated that he doesn't buy some of the comments that were made in the letter and the conclusion is really, looking at the referendum, it says that the tennis courts were supposed to be refurbished not replaced and a difference of either \$100,000 to \$400,000 is quite a bit difference. Deputy Mayor Console also commented that there are several people on the committee that are extremely knowledgeable and one of them is Chief Brymer and he stated that he also spoke to Mr. Dellaripa and stated that they do their homework. He stated that he had some conversation with the Chief and commented that he is doing a yeoman's job and that he gave him some information to think about and he greatly appreciates that. Deputy Mayor Console stated that the Town and the Committee needs more people like him and Mr. Dellaripa to see this project through and hopes that they stay on and that it does come off properly. Deputy Mayor Console stated there are some obstacles regarding the amount of traffic on Wells Rd., obstacles with all the fencing that has gone up now and it is like a maze for parents to get their kids to school and for the students to drive into school. He commented that he believes it will be hampered by the winter months coming up so there are a lot of things we have to look also and is sure we will work this out. He thanked the Chief and stated that we really have to keep on this and stated that he sent a letter to the Chairman and there will be a follow-up letter in a day or so and he will

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have those people contact you and thinks he will get a different overview of what they think and they are nationwide and it is what they do so hopefully it might shed some light on things.

Deputy Mayor Console commented that in going to some of the Rotarian meetings he decided and maybe the town should do this in the next council, to take the rotary four-way test which include: is it the truth, is it fair to all concerns, will it be good will to the town and is it beneficial to all concerns. This is something that we should think about and use those words because the Rotarians seem to do a very good job at that.

Deputy Mayor Console commented on a comment that Mr. Copp made and stated that Thomas Jefferson once wrote a comment which said, "when the people are all well informed, they can be trusted with their own government". Deputy Mayor Console commented that he thinks with this council meeting as the town meetings and all and going forward to our state legislature and the federal government which is totally out of control, the more people know and the better they are informed the better our government is and that's us what we have to work on and thinks it starts here from this group going forward.

Councilor Hurley thanked Jim McAlister for his service. He also thanked Judy Keane for putting on a great carnival and commented that all three days were great and thinks they raised a lot of money for their charity.

Councilor Roberts commented that she was on the bracelet detail also at the carnival and stated that it was a great event and Judy said that this was the best carnival in three years because of the weather and kids were coming and they had bracelets from all three days. She stated that a lot of town folks came to it too and it was nice to have an activity for everyone in town.

Councilor Roberts commented on the Japanese delegation visit and stated that they are lovely people and she got to try her fledgling Japanese on them and tried to remember how to use chopsticks and they were so gracious and interested in Wethersfield that we really need to keep up the sister city contacts. She stated that she attended the tours with them and it is interesting to see your town when you are showing it to other people because I think we forget what a beautiful town it is. Councilor Roberts stated that many of the historical sites we have they were thrilled to see the Webb House and were thrilled to see where George Washington had been and they kept calling him Georgie. She stated that it is a beautiful town and when you think of our form of government and the participation of the people in town at many levels, she was proud to show it to them. Councilor Roberts wanted to thank in addition to the Mayor, Jeff Bridges and especially Peter Gillespie because he really worked hard and coordinated a lot of the transportation and the activities for this delegation. She stated that Jeff Bridges was like a permanent tour guide. She commented that it really worked well and believes that they appreciated the visit and all the councilors and people from the board that participated as well as the citizens that came to meet them at the community reception.

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Councilor Montinieri wanted to reiterate on the Security position and stated that it is obvious that it is not going to get addressed by this council which he is disappointed to learn and stated that he received that letter as well that was forwarded to Jeff and council. He stated that many of the components in that letter talk about major initiatives that need to be addressed and will be addressed through recommendations but many of those have already been examined and the Security Director position that we should have supported and addressed prior to this initiative should have happened now, in his opinion, because it has already been supported publicly by this council and supported and recommended by our Police Chief as well as the Board and Director of our schools at the Superintendent level. Councilor Montinieri commented that he will characterize it as kicking it down the sidewalk and is disappointed that it is not happening and thinks it should have with this council because this council is aware of all the dynamics that went into the budget this spring and how it ended up being cut as well as the points that he has made in the previous council meetings so he just wanted to express his disappointment that it is being pushed off.

Councilor Montinieri thanked Councilor McAlister beyond the points that others have made about him and stated that the one thing that he has enjoyed about him is he is not a politician and stated that he has looked across the aisle and just talked about things in a common sense fashion and thinks that's one of the reasons why they have connected. He wished Councilor McAlister good luck and commented that they will miss his point of view.

Councilor Manousos commented that he was at the Cove Carnival with Mike and had beer duty that day and stated that it is a great community event and probably the best that they ever had according to Judy and the other volunteers.

Councilor Manousos asked Mr. Bridges if the road that Councilor Kotkin was talking about is going to get paved.

Mr. Bridges responded that we will look to see what we can do to fix it. It won't be resurfaced but we will patch what we can.

Councilor Manousos commented that he is glad that his road paving program that we fully funded and the pay as you go approach actually did work rather than necessary bonding and is pleased to see that that is happening.

Councilor Manousos commented on the budget process stating that we basically used the same process over the last two or three years and we've done that really without any issues with favorable results and I don't recall really any complains except in the last few months. He stated that we certainly didn't hide any deliberations; it's not exactly how it happened. He explained that the process in the first year that that was elected four years ago we brought every department head in and we asked them for basically what would it look like for a zero budget and we really got into the weeds on their budgets. He explained that after we became more familiar with the departmental budgets and it became a more straight-forward process this wasn't as necessary. He

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explained that the process became one where we assembled questions for the Town Manager and we brought in only those departments in areas that needed significant discussion so this process was much more efficient, much more effective than past practice and everybody here agreed to that process despite what you may have heard lately. He stated that you only need to see the results over the last few years to compare to the previous process to see how it worked out for the town in terms of our taxing and spending. He explained that over the last four years our average taxes and spending has gone up only 1.7%. He stated that that might not be the level that Mr. Young would like but compared to the five years previous where taxes went up and spending 40%, I think we have had some great measurable results. Mr. Manousos commented that he knows that you are interested in how this process went and who actually recommended part of it and commented that we all did and referred to an email that came from Councilor Montinieri who suggested "it might not be necessary to have every department come out and present their individual budgets, we would as a council assemble for the Town Manager any significant inquiries and proposed modifications for assembly and then bring in those area departments where there might be significant discussion". Councilor Manousos explained we had a discussion on that so I'm sorry you don't like the process and he may be a candidate that you like so hopefully if you still like that, you should still vote for him. He added that that was done on April 8, in our budget process. He added that he doesn't feel that he needs to address the radio contract and kind of recognize where that went and how it is good for the town and the bid process that we did go through; despite some of the noise you might hear that it was a no-bid contract. He commented that it was certainly bid out over an 18-month period again and every councilor agreed to it a long time ago. He added that he does appreciate the last four years being here with everybody and if the voters bring us back, then that would be great, if not, we are ok with that.

Councilor Roberts commented that the gentleman in the hat is Mike and he has been here for many years speaking on a regular basis and she appreciates his comments and not to rehash history, not everyone agreed on the budget process.

Councilor Montinieri commented that he wants to be clear that what Councilor Manousos just cited in an email which was an email sent that was never responded to where I attempted to identify what I thought would be a method that would ensure that we had some dialogue before we voted, that never got responded to. Councilor Montinieri stated that he just wants to be clear about the facts because Stathis has a way of turning things with a certain direction and I would prefer not to have that kind of banter, but if he is going to bring it up, then I am going to respond. Councilor Montinieri stated that we did not meet with the department heads, we did not have a discussion as a council ever about the full budget, we never met with the Board, we had a budget process that not a single board member agreed with and so for Mr. Manousos to say that we all came to an agreement is simply a misrepresentation and again I hate to rehash our last meeting together but you can't sit here and have him throw out things that are not accurate and not respond, unfortunately.

Councilor Manousos commented that those were his words, not mine.

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Councilor Montinieri responded that he is glad to quote his words and his words said in that letter, Stathis, and wished that he would stop being so defensive, and stated that his words in there were saying as opposed to since the decision was made apparently unbeknown to us not to meet with the department heads, I suggested to the Town Manager, since we were not aware of how it was going to done, that perhaps we would assemble some of the directors of the departments questions or thoughts from ourselves and summarize that and at least have some dialogue. Again, that never got responded to, we never met with a department head and we passed the budget without any conversations and without rehashing, like Gerry said, we had a long dialogue on the night that we passed the budget about our frustrations with not knowing anything about that process. Councilor Montinieri commented that he doesn't like being mischaracterized and doesn't like his words being used against when you don't bring them up when I offer them to it the very first time and you did that during the budget process with the question about the Board as well, Stathis, where I sent you an email which again you never responded to, that talked about how there was no dialogue with the Board at all and I suggested that we have some discussion about the budget with the Board before we pass along cuts and in contrast to what was said publicly tonight, we weren't advocating for no cuts, we were advocating for cuts with consultation, that's the difference, so when you're saying to the public out there if you like the way things are done, you should vote for that councilor. Councilor Montinieri commented that he believes the public will speak as appropriately up or down on all of us in a couple of weeks and I'm not campaigning, I'm just talking about correcting things that you are saying that are incorrect so if you are going to get up there and say stuff, let's be honest, let's be factual and let's not put out a distorted view of emails.

Deputy Mayor Console commented that he did have the liberty to go back and look back at some of our minutes and the tally and all and for \$59 million dollar Board of Education budget, we spent a total with the Board of Education of about 52 minutes which I found to be nowhere near enough time and the Board of Education spent 17 hours which is nowhere near enough time to really vet that entire budget, so for what that's worth, I did not agree with that and my comments on why I didn't vote on the budget had nothing to do with making additional cuts, it had to do with not getting enough information to make a viable decision on where we stood with the Board of Education.

Councilor Kotkin commented that he wanted to thank Councilor Manousos for commenting that the republican budgets have basically been the budgets of the town for the last four years which is accurate, it has been the budget, fortunately, our health care costs have gone down a million and a half dollars in that period of time, but his accuracy is not mirrored, unfortunately, in the republican ad which ran in the last edition of Wethersfield Life which basically credited the republicans for five years of budget restraint. He stated that of course, they have only been in power for four so they are crediting themselves with no budget increase in fiscal 2010 when, of course, that budget was passed by a majority democratic council. He commented that we have one more round of advertising that is going on in the last issue of Wethersfield Life. Certainly

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neither party has seen each other's ads and I'm hopeful that the republicans actually fix this mistake if they are going to rerun this ad.

Councilor Hurley commented that he believes that the ad was just supposed to show that the democrats who were in control in the previous five years before we got in raised taxes 40% and we did not; we kept it about 1.7% a year and that is all it was meant to say.

Councilor Kotkin thanked Mike and commented that he hopes he looked at the ad because there are four that says republican council and it has 5 years.

Councilor Hurley responded that that was a mistake by the paper and I believe that what it was supposed to represent was that you raised taxes quite a bit and that is why I ran for town council to keep taxes low but keep our services in place.

Councilor Kotkin responded so it was a mistake by the paper and not by the republicans.

Councilor Hurley responded that he is not sure how it got in.

Councilor Kotkin responded that it is red so he assumed that you guys put the color coding in the bars and did it inaccurately.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Bridges thanked everybody that participated in the visit with the Japanese delegation. It was tremendous and he concurs with Gerri's comments to Peter, thank you very much and he did a great job in helping to coordinate those events. He stated that the mayor did a great job and it was a busy three days but a great three days.

Mr. Bridges commented that he received a letter from Charlie Viani that he is resigning as Harbormaster and stated that he has some other things that he has to focus on. Mr. Bridges commented that that will be a big loss in that position.

Mr. Bridges explained that we have an issue with the Cove Dock project and that the Federal government is looking at what we were proposing as match and have some questions regarding the match. We were using in-kind matches as well as some cash, so we are trying to sort out with the feds what exactly they were looking for for match versus what we can provide as match so over the next couple of weeks we are going to put a conference call together between the state and the federal government and see if we can work that out.

Mr. Bridges commented that he did speak to the Town Manager in Enfield about the Audit Committee. He stated that they had one back in 2008 that focused solely on the Board of Education. He explained that the big take away from that was a shifting of the maintenance of

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the buildings from the Board of Education to the town side and that is what he took away from that process.

Mayor Hemmann asked if that committee was still in existence.

Mr. Bridges responded no. They talked about doing the town side but they never did it.

TOWN CLERK COMMUNICATIONS

Dolores Sassano asked to remove the minutes from the last meeting because she forgot to send them out.

Dolores Sassano reported that we have an election coming up and she will be available in her office for absentee ballots on November 2, from 9:00 to noon. She explained that absentee ballots are available for residents who require them from her office so they can call and we will send them an application and when we receive the application back we will send out the ballot.

OTHER BUSINESS

Deputy Mayor Console moved **“TO ADD A PERSONNEL ACTION THAT HAS TO DO WITH THE TOWN MANAGER’S COMPENSATION”**, seconded by Councilor Manousos.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

COUNCIL ACTION

Councilor Montinieri moved **“TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATIONS OF CHARLES P. VIANI, 72 SUNRISE TERRACE AS HARBORMASTER EFFECTIVE 1-2012 TO 6-30-14”, GLORIA MCLEAN, 38 MIDWELL ROAD, FROM THE HUMAN RIGHTS AND RELATIONS COMMISSION, EFFECTIVE 7-1-12-2013 TO 6-30-15 AND JAMES M. STREETO, 17 PERKINS ROW, FROM THE CENTRAL CONNECTICUT HEALTH DISTRICT EFFECTIVE 7-1-2011 TO 6-30-2014**, seconded by Councilor Kotkin.

Councilor Hurley thanked Charlie and commented that he worked with him on the Parks and Recreation Board and stated that he did a great job.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

Deputy Mayor Console **“TO APPOINT LESLIE ESOIAN, 94 RANDY LANE TO THE YOUTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR THE TERM 10-21-13 TO 6-30-16”**, seconded by Councilor Hurley.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

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Councilor Montinieri moved **“TO APPOINT CAROLINE TEDONE, 27 OLD PEPPERIDGE LANE TO THE SENIOR CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR THE TERM 10-21-13 TO 6-30-14” AND CAROLYN OWEN, 32 BELMONT STREET TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS AND RELATIONS COMMISSION FOR THE TERM 10-21-13 TO 6-30-15”**, seconded by Councilor Roberts.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Councilor Hurley moved to **“CONTINUE TO TABLE THE ITEM UNTIL THE NOVEMBER 18, 2013 TOWN COUNCIL MEETING”**, seconded by Councilor Manousos.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

OTHER BUSINESS

Councilor Hurley moved **“TO CANCEL THE NOVEMBER 4, 2013 TOWN COUNCIL MEETING”**, seconded by Councilor McAlister.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

Councilor Manousos moved **“TO APPROVE TO ENTER INTO PARTNERSHIP WITH CRCOG AND CT TRANSIT TO IMPLEMENT THE BUS SHELTER PROGRAM AS PROPOSED AND TO PROVIDE THE REQUIRED 10% MATCH THROUGH A COMBINATION OF CASH AND IN-KIND SERVICES”**, seconded by Councilor Hurley.

Mr. Bridges explained that Peter Gillespie is here this evening to discuss this issue with you. He explained that CRCOG has been working for the better part of the decade on a program, to not only replace the bus shelters, but to develop a process where they can be maintained properly. He stated that currently right now the shelters we have are not being maintained other than when they become too dilapidated to stand, we take them down. He explained that Peter has been working with CRCOG on a program to install new ones and provide for their maintenance.

Mr. Gillespie explained that we have been working for quite some time with CRCOG and CT Transit to figure out a way to affordably replace and install new shelters throughout the community. He explained that at this point and time CRCOG and CT Transit have targeted some transit enhancement federal funding and to do so they require as part of the federal initiative that we have a local match. Mr. Gillespie explained that they are asking that each community and there are seven communities in the region that are participating that have come up with a 10% match to offset the costs that meet the federal obligation and our share in that match would be roughly \$17,500. He stated that they have provided us with the option of providing that match

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through a combination of cash and in-kind services. Mr. Gillespie explained that in-kind services could consist of assistance from the public works department to physical services department to demolish and prepare the sites for the shelters and also match from the Engineering Department and my department to secure permit approvals and designs to do that so we are in the process of having that conversation with them as to exactly what our hourly rates would be and what the total match would be and then if there is a balance we would look to see if we could come up with some cash to offset that cost. He explained that in our particular case we are looking at nine shelters throughout the community. He stated that five are replacement and four a new shelters. He stated that in your packet there are some suggestions on what the shelters could look like. They are pretty standard bus shelters, nothing particularly fancy. He explained that one of the wrinkles and one of the ways that they will fund the long-term maintenance and in terms of maintenance the town would not have any obligation in terms of the maintenance. The maintenance would be performed by CT Transit. He explained that maintenance would consist of graffiti removal, snow plowing, repairs to the shelters, pretty much any maintenance that is involved. He stated that those costs would be assumed by CT Transit. He added that the way they do that is that they would offset their cost by recouping some funding by placing some advertising in certain shelters. Mr. Gillespie explained that in our particular case, most of the shelters are going to be located in commercial areas, primarily the Silas Deane Highway so the thought is to allow advertising with limitations in those locations throughout the community to offset the cost of that. He stated that in your packet there are also some standards in there about limitations on the advertising and how the advertising would be solicited but they think that is an effective way to offset the maintenance costs. He explained that the we still have to work out those details with the Planning and Zoning Commissions and we have to go through a process to do that but before I started that process, I wanted to make sure that the council was supportive the ideas that they are presenting at this point in time. Mr. Gillespie explained that it has taken a long time to get to this point. They put it out to bid several years ago and did not get qualified bidders. He stated that this time around they think they have solved the best way to approach this.

Councilor Montinieri commented that the members of the Infrastructure talked about this and one of the concerns that several of them had was the design of the particular shelters is less than attractive and unfortunately because of the nature of the funding of it CRCOG we are a little handcuffed on how much influence we can have on it and am still a little concerned about that. He stated that Mr. Gillespie obviously might have his arms around the advertising piece but it might be prudent before we design those restrictions we do come up with maybe there is a member of either council or some subcommittee that can participate, maybe a member of the Infrastructure because there may be an appropriate need for some public input on that. He stated that physical piece of it in terms of how it looks we are going to reaction, I suspect from the public when they go up and they are going to say they seem to be less than great but they advertising piece we have a little control over so I am hoping that maybe we can do that so would be my only suggestion.

Mr. Gillespie responded that in terms of process, he thinks that once we figure out what our

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match obligations are, we do plan on coming back to work out the details and provide you with some additional specifics that aren't necessarily available right now so there will be some additional opportunities and we will take your comments under consideration as we go forward at this point.

Councilor Kotkin commented that having taken the bus to work in his earlier working days; he can appreciate why you need functioning bus shelters for the folks who line CT Transit. He stated that he saw the nine proposed locations that we have and most of them, as you said, are in commercial areas. He stated that it seems that there's a few maybe near the motor vehicle department, then near Folly Brook and Jordan Lane which certainly aren't commercial and they would probably not be appropriate for advertising.

Mr. Gillespie responded that where we are placing the shelter down at the DMV which would not have advertising it's also in the historic district so we will have to pursue that approval. He stated that there is one location up on Folly Brook which is also in a residential area and there may be one or two others that we are going to look at that may not warrant advertising so we are certainly going to be considerate of the location and the commercial versus residential areas.

Councilor Kotkin asked if you had said only five or so of the shelters with advertising does this equation still work.

Mr. Gillespie responded that he thinks it does and stated that he will be talking to them in more detail because in his mind there are one or two that are probably on the margin and we may not want to have advertising so I will have to talk to them specifically. He stated that there are also ways that he thinks we can get our match lowered so our obligation is less and that might also help based on the budget that he has looked at, so there are certainly some things in play that they will continue to look at.

Mayor Hemmann commented that if you look at the pictures that were provided and it shows there's two dark ones, I guess the difference is the shield on the front.

Mr. Gillespie responded that there are several options, there is a metallic finish which is kind of the silver and then there is a black painted finish. He stated that the black painted finish appears to be the preference in the region. The glass itself can be changed and that is another option. He believes there are some smoked glass which I don't think is our preference, I think clear glass is probably preferred in our particular case, the roof style is kind of hooped style so some of those are kind of fixed, but I still think there is some room. Mr. Gillespie explained that they haven't picked a specific manufactured design so there is still some room for additional input on that. They are bus shelters so there are not great things we can do with them unless we come up with a custom architecturally design style which will raise the costs substantially but I think there are some conversations being held. He stated that they do need the front panel to block the snow, so we had looked at an open design which would also have been more attractive but given our climate, there are also some limitations on the style of shelters that we should have particularly as

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snow and slush and rain gets knocked up by vehicles into the shelters. As you said earlier, our shelters are in deplorable condition and the documentation you have shows that this was supposed to be seven new shelters, but since they put the paperwork together, two of those shelters have come down either by accidents or forces of Mother Nature.

Deputy Mayor Console asked about the graffiti factor.

Mr. Gillespie responded that that would be part of the maintenance responsibility. He stated that in the packet there is a weekly maintenance provision and then there is a monthly maintenance schedule as well for the more significant thing but graffiti in terms of the agreement is covered under CT Transit maintenance responsibilities. He explained if the panels get damaged, they would get replaced. If the shelter gets significantly damaged then they would be dealing with a new and or replacement shelter as well.

A discussion ensued regarding the style of the shelters and allowable advertising content.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

Councilor McAlister moved **“TO CHANGE THE TOWN MANAGER’S COMPENSATION FROM \$120,000 TO \$123,600”**, seconded by Councilor Manousos.

Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted. The motion passed 8-0-1. Deputy Mayor Console abstained.

Councilor McAlister moved **“TO DELETE ITEM 6A REGULAR MEETING MINUTES FROM THE AGENDA”**, seconded by Councilor Hurley.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS, APPOINTMENTS FOR INTRODUCTION

Mayor Hemmann pointed out a Resolution for a Charter Revision: Introduction of process to review the Town Charter that will be introduced at the next council meeting.

Councilor Roberts commented that she was on the last charter revision commission along with other folks and it was a pretty comprehensive process for people to be involved in that and she believes that there were articles in the paper and the Town Manager asked people who were interested to contact the Mayor and indicate their interest so that we had a broad level of representation and interest and talents on the commission and asked if we are going to be doing that this time.

Mayor Hemmann responded yes, this is just to get it out there, get it ready and start working.

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Councilor Roberts commented that she is concerned because it says to appoint the Charter Revision Commission, seven people and it would take effect within 30 days of the day it is passed so she is just concerned that there won't be a lot of time to meet that requirement if we don't start now even before we pass this resolution.

Mayor Hemmann acknowledged her comment.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

David Caruk, 149 Board St, commented on the relentless bullying of Mr. Walsh by public speakers and defended that Mr. Walsh is a class act. He commented that speakers have a limited amount of time to speak and that time should be honored by the public and stated that all Town Councils have a limit on speaking.

Martin Walsh, 15 Lauren Way, thanked the council for their time there and gave them his best wishes. He thanked the Mayor for the visit from the Japanese Delegation and thought it was a very classy reception. Mr. Walsh commented that he has been concerned for some time about the communication between the Town Council and the Board of Education and this whole idea of the Security Director. He stated that they spent a lot of time working their budget out and it was a unanimous budget. He commented that Mr. Cascio told him on two separate occasions that he had tried to set up a meeting between the council and the Board to discuss the budget before we met and he received just no interest in meeting to talk to us. He stated that when we came before you, you said that you had worked out a thoughtful process. He stated that we told you that any cuts in their budget would result in the cut of the Security Director and the Curriculum Director for Mathematics. Mr. Walsh explained that they felt that they had to act as the Board of Education and not the Board of Security and if they had enough money for the Security Director, they would do it but education had to come first. He explained that when it finally came to the vote and it took five votes, it didn't seem like a very thoughtful process and when you finally came back out and made the final cut it seemed like you guys were winging it and didn't have any understanding of our budget process at all and it shouldn't be that way and that is not the way the decision should be made. Mr. Walsh commented that they incurred about \$150,000 in security costs over the course of their budget that they weren't expecting to make. As of January 1, we were pulling money out of the maintenance budget so that we can harden our facilities, locks on classroom doors, flexible walls that had to be hardened and those were all considerations that we had to make. Mr. Walsh encouraged the council going forward to communicate better so that we can work together for the community.

Mr. Young, 20 Coppermill Rd., commented on the increase in budgets over the last several years and stated that what people forgot to talk about even back then when they were doing their budgets, people refused to realize that the economy was taking a bad hit. He stated that it been reported by the Hartford Courant that we lost 9% of our economy due to the recession that started in 2008. Mr. Young commented that our taxes kept going up and he was standing here saying that we should reduce our budget by 10 percent and now it has been indicated that we have lost

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9% over the last four or five years even though they claim the recession is over. Mr. Young stated that the recession is not over and peoples' homes are being foreclosed on. He stated that during those years, we should have adjusted our budgets downward. He commented that during these times college graduates can't find jobs and others have lost their jobs. He commented that people are suffering dollar wise in this town because the council keeps jacking the taxes up.

George A. Ruhe, 956 Cloverdale Cir., encouraged that we give the Charter Revision a real good look. He stated that during the last Charter Revision the taxpayers were still a viable force in town and we had representatives practically at every meeting. He stated that there was ample opportunity to share their thoughts and that was appreciated. He commented to get citizen involvement and to make sure that the make-up of that Board is not made up of people with a vested interest in either their volunteer jobs, their paid jobs or part of the establishment. You should try to look and find some young and old people whose brains still work to kind of share some thoughts of life's experience that might enhance the charter. Mr. Young stated that he is a firm believer that we should have a referendum on the budget and that there should be uniform policy throughout the town in terms of citizens rights to address their elected officials and stated that East Hartford has an unlimited amount of time to speak to the council. Mr. Young suggested caution on the Security Director and stated that Security Director's are sort of overhead. He stated that he hears language that we are going to make our children safe but you haven't got that power to do that. You can reduce the opportunities to have disastrous problems, but here it is coming up after a year in Newtown and we still have shootings over in Nevada today.

Paul Copp. 100 Executive, commented that Enfield was one of the six towns in Connecticut that used the Audit committee and, in fact, one of the things that we have been suggesting for a while is the takeover of maintenance from the Board of Education for all the schools did work there and is working there so I hope that is followed up somehow.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:55 p.m., Deputy Mayor Console moved **"TO ADJOURN THE MEETING"** seconded by Councilor Manousos. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

Dolores G. Sassano
Town Clerk

Approved by Vote of Council
November 11, 2013